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LETTER DATED 1 AUGUST 1994 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ISRAEL TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I wish to refer to the letter dated 13 July 1994 addressed to you by the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations (S/1994/826).

Regrettably, both the tone and content of the above-mentioned letter are far from what would be expected from a country that declares itself to be committed to the peace process and is participating in the bilateral negotiations with Israel aimed at peacefully settling the dispute between the two countries.

Despite the content of the Lebanese letter, the international community is fully aware that armed members of the Hezbollah and other terrorist organizations function with impunity in Lebanon, equipped with mortars and Katyusha missiles, and are free to plan and carry out attacks and shellings both in northern Israel and Lebanon. It will be noted that members and installations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) are not immune from these attacks and have suffered casualties as a result thereof. All of the above occur without any serious attempt by the Government of Lebanon to act effectively in order to prevent such activities.

These terrorist groups are openly intent on undermining the peace process, regardless of the better interests of Lebanon itself and in open abuse of Lebanon's national unity, sovereignty and integrity. They are armed, trained and supported by the Islamic Republic of Iran and other countries, which are also engaged in support for international terrorism.

If Lebanon is indeed committed to peacefully settling its dispute with Israel through bilateral negotiation within the peace process initiated at Madrid, then Lebanon should not undermine this process by openly sanctioning terror directed against Israel.

International law prohibits Lebanon from sanctioning and encouraging terror, under any guise. The Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1970, forbids States to allow their territory to be used for acts

directed against neighbouring States. The policy of Lebanon concerning the Hezbollah and similar organizations stands in clear contradiction to this Declaration.

Israel has repeatedly stated that while welcoming the opportunity peacefully to settle its dispute with Lebanon through direct negotiations, the object of which is a peace treaty, it nevertheless remains committed to protecting its population from the terrorism that continues to emanate from Lebanese territory.

The security measures Israel has taken in southern Lebanon must be viewed in the light of Israel's right to self-defence. With regard to Israel's air strike against the Hezbollah base at Ayn Dardara on 2 June 1994, it should be noted that this measure was intended solely to prevent acts of terror against the Israeli population. Some Lebanese statements have misrepresented the true nature of the Israeli action by seeking to portray it as directed against a civilian target. In fact, the area of the Ayn Dardara base served only for terrorist training. There were no civilian residents therein. No casualties outside the base occurred.

Being actively engaged in a peace process aimed at achieving a peaceful settlement of its dispute with Israel, Lebanon is estopped from attempting to internationalize that dispute by raising in the Security Council issues that are properly addressed in the framework of the bilateral negotiations.

Israel is encouraged by the historic progress towards peace that has occurred during the past year both in the bilateral and multilateral tracks of the peace process. In this respect we would like to recall the Declaration of Principles signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) at Washington, D.C., on 13 September 1993; the subsequent Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area signed at Cairo on 4 May 1994; the Agreed Common Agenda signed by Israel and Jordan at Washington, D.C., on 14 September 1993; the Washington Declaration signed on the occasion of the meeting between His Excellency President William J. Clinton of the United States of America, His Majesty King Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and His Excellency Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of the State of Israel, at Washington, D.C., on 25 July 1994; and the ongoing bilateral negotiations between Israel and Jordan, and Israel and the Palestinians.

We hope to see progress as well in the negotiations between Israel and its other neighbours, including Lebanon. We call upon the Government of Lebanon to take the necessary steps that will enable the negotiations to proceed and reach their successful conclusion, namely, the signing of a formal peace treaty between Israel and Lebanon.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Gad YAACOBI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
Israel to the United Nations